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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the 105 replies received from UNESCO Member States to the International Bureau of Education (IBE) questionnaire. All the data appearing in the paper, including the statistics, were drawn exclusively from the replies of the member countries. The one- or two-paragraph responses in the paper to the 71-item questionnaire are arranged by topic: (1) definitions of terms such as "illiterate" and "functional illiterate"; (2) current trends in enrollment for primary education and adult education; (3) national plans concerning basic education; (4) partners in the literacy process (including educational establishments, involvement of the army, participation of public and private organizations, and financing of literacy activities); (5) program content and literacy methods; and (6) international cooperation and the role of UNESCO. (RS)

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ED 378 553

ANALYSIS OF REPLIES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE THEME OF THE FORTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LITERACY EDUCATION (1990)

by V. Adamets and I. Kouassigan

International Bureau of Education

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This document represents an analysis of the 105 replies received from UNESCO Member States to the IBE questionnaire. The replies themselves were presented in document no. 2 in this series which appeared in December 1991. All the data appearing in this document, including the statistics, have been drawn exclusively from these replies. The names of Member States are those that existed at the time the replies were prepared (1989-90).

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DEFINITIONS[1]

1. The first questions in the IBE's inquiry concerning the definition of an illiterate and a functional illiterate dealt with one of the most sensitive areas in the literacy situation: its conceptual basis and, therefore, the dividing lines between different sections of the illiterate population and different levels of literacy activity. The general impression is that it is difficult to draw a sharp line between these levels since the "classic" literacy programmes entirely based on the "3Rs" (reading, writing and arithmetic) are now are now found less often and elements of functional literacy can be found in nearly every literacy programme.

2. Seventy-four of the countries replying to the question on the definition of illiterate said they agreed with UNESCO's definition, sometimes with restrictions or changes. For seventeen other countries this definition does not apply to them, while fifteen of them provided their own definition. Among these, some gave a modified form of UNESCO's definition.

3. Some definitions go beyond the acquisition of the 3Rs and mention other criteria (for example, Iraq expects the literate to have mastered reading, writing and arithmetic enabling him to develop his vocation and to upgrade the cultural, social and economic standards of his life and to exercise his rights and duties as a citizen). We should also mention the Nicaraguan definition according to which the illiterate is a person possessing knowledge of his immediate world and a level of education gained from his work, his social confrontations and his experience, capable of interpreting multi-dimensional messages in the environment in which he lives but with shortcomings in reading and writing. Other specific definitions introduced supplementary skills: Yugoslavia defined the illiterate as a person who does not know how to read or write while understanding the alphabet (Cyrillic or Latin), and who has no basic knowledge of disciplines such as history, geography and biology at primary grade IV level or has not mastered the four basic mathematical operations. One common tendency observed is to consider that the minimum level at which a person can be accepted as a literate is that of knowledge equivalent to the end of, and sometimes beyond, primary studies.

4. Sixty-two countries agreed with the definition of functional illiterate proposed by UNESCO. Fifteen countries do not consider UNESCO's definition as relevant to them, and gave their own definition. In Colombia, the functional illiterate is an adult person of over 14 years who has learned to read and write but who, through a lack of practice, has forgotten what he learned and has fallen into illiteracy, and in these circumstances is unable to promote his own and his community's development and must be viewed as limited in his active participation in the socio-political and economic context in which he lives. Hungary defines the functional illiterate as a person who, while having learned some basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic, is unable to use them in his daily life. Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama and the USSR put forward similar definitions. In its definition, Oman stresses the incapacity of applying basic skills to advance personal productivity or to develop personal skills or to develop the community in general. While supporting

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[1] Illiterate: "a person who cannot, with understanding, both read and write a short, simple statement on his everyday life".

Functional illiterate: "a person who cannot engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his group and community, and also for enabling him to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his own and the community's development".

Oman in the promotion of productivity, Ecuador's definition emphasizes the influence of science and technology on the political, economic, social and cultural prospects of national development. In France the expression "functional illiterate" has not been used since the beginning of the 1980s and has been replaced with the term "illettré". This means young people or adults who have not mastered instrumental skills - reading, writing, arithmetic, concepts of space and time, logical thinking - even though they may have accomplished some formal education.

In some countries the minimum age at which a person is considered as an illiterate adult is lower than that used in UNESCO's statistical data, i.e. 15 years of age; in Kuwait it is 14 years, in Yemen 10 years and in the Syrian Arab Republic 8 years.

5. Some countries admit the lack of a universally accepted definition for the functional illiterate or the existence of several different definitions. In Denmark, for example, the most widespread definition is that proposed by Harris and Hodges in 1981 according to which "a person is functionally illiterate when his ability to read is so low that he is unable to carry out those activities where this skill is an integral part of the culture or the group to which this person belongs". In the Federal Republic of Germany the term "secondary illiterates" is used as a synonym of functional illiterates and is used for people who have partially or totally lost the reading and writing skills acquired at school. This reply specifies that, because of differences between the requirements of the social environment and those connected with vocational qualifications, there are no generally applicable criteria to determine an adequate or inadequate level of these skills. The Canadian reply notes that in its national context the phrase "basic literacy" is sometimes used to describe elementary skills and programmes. This reply makes known the diversity of definitions and criteria used by the various provinces and by different institutions in the country, and it states that these definitions can be grouped into two categories: those stressing self-assessment of needs and those placing emphasis on "objective" criteria. For purposes of policy assessment programme administration and the development of public awareness it has long been a convention to use census data on the highest level of schooling attained as a proxy measure of basic illiteracy (0-4 years of schooling) and functional illiteracy (5-8 years of schooling).

6. It is no doubt due to a certain lack of clarity in the concept of functional literacy that thirty-one countries, both industrialized and devevoping, indicated that they do not consider functional illiterates as a separate category. As evidence, Sri Lanka states that the functional illiteracy is not a problem in that country; similarly, the functional illiterate does not exist in Cuba and in the People's Democratic Republic of Korea. On the other hand, Finland recognizes only one category of illiterates, functional illiterates. The difficulty of establishing a clear distinction between the two groups is illustrated by the reply from Congo where functional illiterates "are lost in the mass of other illiterates", and that of the Republic of Korea, which indicates that, strictly speaking, most programmes are trying to teach functional literacy.

7. In order to avoid a dichotomy "literate-illiterate", some replies put forward a more diversified classification of levels of literacy. For example, Kuwait describes two levels without distinguishing between "simple" and functional literacy. Mexico separates "simple" literacy, functional literacy and semi-illiteracy. Ethiopia reports three levels: literacy, post-literacy and continuing education. The Republic of Korea proposes four levels: illiterate, semi-illiterate, literate and functional literate.

CURRENT TRENDS IN ENROLMENTS FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION AND ADULT EDUCATION

Primary education enrolment

8. Of the sixty-five countries which provided information on the evolution in primary school enrolments over the last ten years, forty-eight reported an increase, seven mentioned stability and nineteen countries a decrease. Amongst the latter, there are ten industrialized countries which mention that this decrease is due to the influence of demographic trends. The following table groups the evolution in the percentage of primary school enrolment amongst the countries which provided adequate data:

Increase

Bangladesh	1980-1988	37.30%
Benin	1979-1989	35.01%
Brazil	1975-1985	23.74%
Burundi	1978/79-1987/88	264.92%
Chad	1982-1990	100%
Ecuador	1978-1988	32.51%
El Salvador	1979-1988	10.88%
Egypt	1979/80-1988/89	56.80%
Ethiopia	1978/79-1987/88	109%
Gabon	1978-1988	40.00%
Ghana	1980/81-1988/89	16.02%
Guinea	1979/80-1988/89	9.92%
India	1978-1986	26.36%
Iraq	1979/80-1988/89	15.86%
Israel	1979/80-1988/89	10.70%
Jordan	1978/79-1988/89	38.84%
Kenya	1979-1989	35.04%
Malawi	1976-1988	66.21%
Myanmar	1978/79-1987/88	annual rate of increase 3.5%
Oman	1979/80-1988/89	173.24%
Pakistan	1977/78-1987/88	54.77%
Saudi Arabia	1976/77-1985/86	85.58%
Swaziland	1976-1986	53.36%
Syrian Arab Republic	1978/79-1987/88	57.61%
Tunisia	1981/82-1988//89	22.80%
Uganda	1980-1989	129.25%
Ukraine	1980/81-1987/88	13.37%

Decrease

Austria	1977/78-1988/89	23.11%
Bulgaria	1983/84-1988/89	10.79%
Canada	1977/78-1987/88	5.50%
Chile	1978-1988	10.20%
Czechoslovakia	1985/86-1988/89	3.01%
Germany	1980-1987	16.58%
Grenada	1978-1988	16.90%
Japan	1980-1989	18.80%
Kuwait	1982/83-1988/89	8.23%
Morocco	1983/84-1987/88	12.75%
Republic of Korea	1980-1988	14.81%
Spain	1984/85-1987/88	4.31%
Switzerland	1979-1988	18.16%
Thailand	1981-1988	12.48%

One should not, however, be misled when these percentages are very low since, as indicated in the Brazilian reply, when population increase is taken into consideration, the percentage increase in enrolment is not very significant.

Educational wastage at the primary level

9. Eighty-four countries provided data on success and failure at the primary education level. While the industrialized countries and a certain number of developing countries have achieved universal education or are very close to doing so, and have been able to reduce drop-outs and repeaters to an "acceptable" level, the situation is still disturbing in many other developing countries. Twenty-two countries indicated that less than 50% of the school-age population completed their primary studies. The following table gives a few examples of the situation in some developing countries:

Percentage of children successfully completing primary studies

	In relation to the total primary school-age population	In relation to first-year enrolments
Benin (1988)	4.18	15.42
Burundi (1987/88)	10.70	
Indonesia (1987/88)	15.0	66.0
Mali (1986/87)	19.69	
Morocco (1987/88)		48.0
Mozambique (1988)	3.5	18.3
Myanmar (1987/88)	8.4	
Pakistan (1986/87)	31.55	44.35
Peru (1987)	80.7	
Thailand (1988)	85.93	
Zaire (1987/88)	5.7	29.4

10. Thirty-five countries witnessed a decrease in the number of adult illiterates and thirteen an increase. The most remarkable progress was achieved in Indonesia (a reduction from 17.4 million in 1980 to 4.5 million in 1989) and in Ethiopia where since 1979 the illiteracy rate has dropped from 93% to 23%. The Syrian Arab Republic indicates a significant drop in the number of illiterates since the introduction of compulsory primary education.

Among the countries reporting a considerable increase in the number of illiterates we note Pakistan (22.02% between 1981/82 and 1989/90 - the total number of illiterates has reached 42.11 million), Ghana (2.99 million in 1970 to 4.84 million in 1988/89) and Uganda (2.875 million in 1980 and 3.737 million in 1989). Among the reasons given for an increase in the number of illiterates Peru, for example, mentions demographic growth, the very modest level of education among the population (fourth grade of basic education) and the very limited enrolment ability of the post-literacy system which is only able to recruit 30% of neo-literates.

11. A limited number of countries replied to the question on the evolution of the number of functional illiterates; fifteen countries indicated a decrease and seven others an increase. Most countries stated that they had no statistical data available in this domain.

Some replies from industrialized countries lead one to believe that they only accept that this problem exists among certain population groups (for example, immigrants and gypsies). On the other hand, a number of industrialized countries have recently "discovered" a massive amount of illiteracy or a completely inadequate level of education among their native populations. Thus, in Canada in 1986, an inquiry showed that 3.3% of the population aged 15 and above who had not completed five years of studies should be considered as illiterate; 17.3% of the same population group who had not accomplished nine years of study could be classified amongst the functional illiterate. Another study conducted by Southan, Inc. showed that 4.5 million, or 24% of the adult population, were "basic" or functional illiterates. According to the initial outcomes of an inquiry conducted in Australia in 1989, 25% of the adult population were functional illiterates. A study carried out by the Institute for Publicism of the University of Vienna came to the conclusion that approximately 5% of adult Austrians were completely unable to gain any information whatsoever from a newspaper article. Another 25% of them could only understand half of a text presented to them. Some French estimates have shown that 20% of adults fall into the category of functional illiterates (illettrés). According to some Swiss estimates 20,000 to 30,000 adults are functionally illiterate, not including immigrants.

12. The repeater rate is higher than 20% in sixteen developing countries, and reaches 80% in one extreme case. Meanwhile, nineteen developing countries indicate a repeater rate of less than 10%. Over the last ten years, some have expended a great deal of effort to universalize primary education. Congo, for example, has achieved an enrolment rate for school-age children approaching 98%, however, as is stated in this country's reply: "this quantitative growth is not paralleled by educational quality which still remains inadequate".

13. The IBE's questionnaire invited Member States to number in order of importance the major obstacles to universalizing and improving primary education. An analysis of these replies is presented in the following table:

Obstacles	Number of Replies received	Weighted average[2]	Number of countries indicating this as main obstacle
Lack of financial resources	51	1.61	36
Inadequate educational infrastructures	41	3.19	3
Inadequate family resources	47	3.47	8
Inadequate teacher qualifications	38	4 39	2
Shortage of educational materials	43	4.40	0
Lack of teachers	33	4.97	0
Distance from home to school	40	5.60	4
Curricula ill-suited to children	32	5.78	0
Socio-political situation	22	5.82	5

According to the replies received, Member States consider that the lack of financial resources is the most important obstacle of all. Other problems were identified: demographic growth (Gabon, Morocco); the lack of programmes linking education with work (Chile); early involvement of children in the world of work (Bangladesh); lack of public will (Ghana); the failure of the education system to adapt itself to an evolving situation (Gabon); the very high number of immigrants (Luxembourg); early marriage in some regions (Saudi Arabia). As for the industrialized countries, the main obstacles indicated by them lie outside the school (sickness, visual and hearing handicaps, stuttering, as well as factors involving the family environment). Seven countries stated that there are no obstacles standing in the way of primary education development.

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[2] The relationship between the sum total of points indicating the order of priority and the number of replies received.

Literacy courses for adults

14. Ninety countries indicated the existence of literacy, post-literacy, functional literacy or adult basic literacy courses and/or programmes. Only six countries stated that they do not organize such courses. In most cases literacy courses are followed by post-literacy courses, and seventeen countries organized courses on three levels at the same time: literacy, post-literacy and functional literacy.

15. However, the number of countries reporting that a large part of their illiterate population participate in and complete such courses is rather low (among them we may mention Angola, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Indonesia, Myanmar, Peru, the United Republic of Tanzania and Venezuela). In most cases the number of those who successfully completed literacy courses was no higher than 3% of the illiterate population and was sometimes lower than 1%. The following table gives some examples:

Country	Number completing courses (all types of courses)	Illiterate population (in thousands)[3]	Completers as a percentage of the illiterate population
Bangladesh	155 371 (1988)	41 961 (1990)	0.4
Burkina Faso	8 591 (1988)	4 137 (1990)	0.2
Chad	10 000 (1986)	2 230 (1985)	0.4
Chile	50 904 (1987)	648 (1985)	7.9
Ecuador	63 990 (1986-87)	928 (1985)	6.9
Jordan	11 368 (1988)	470 (1985)	2.4
Kuwait	2 315 (1988-89)	346 (1990)	0.7
Mali	63 000 (1989)	3 398 (1990)	1.8
Philippines	126 629 (1988)	3 852 (1990)	3.3
Peru	211 806 (1988)	2 025 (1990)	10.4
Zimbabwe	17 573 (1987)	1 683 (1985)	1.0

The success rate in literacy courses can be illustrated by the following examples:

Angola: post-literacy courses, 45,6%;
Cape Verde: literacy courses, 76,7%; post-literacy courses, 75.1%;
Guatemala: literacy courses, 70.1%; post-literacy courses, 85.7%;
Guyana: post-literacy courses, 66.2%; functional literacy courses, 77.6%;
Kenya: functional-literacy courses, 82.4%;
Nicaragua: literacy courses, 66.2%; post-literacy courses, 59.6%;
Peru: literacy courses, 54.6%; post-literacy courses, 100%;
Syrian Arab Republic: literacy courses, 66.1%; post-literacy courses, 74.5%;
Turkey: literacy courses, 72.7%; functional literacy courses, 98.3%.

[3] UNESCO compedium of statistics on illiteracy (1990 edition).

16. However, in several countries the success rate is modest: for instance, Mozambique reports a rate of 14.3% for literacy courses and 17.0% for post-literacy courses. Zimbabwe indicates 23.3% for literacy courses, while Swaziland gives 18.3% for literacy, post-literacy and functional literacy courses together. The reply from Rwanda states that the number of enrolments in literacy courses has increased from 65,537 in 1980 to 503,165 in 1990, but the success rate has remained very low and has even dropped from 20 to 8%.

17. As far as the industrialized countries are concerned, in most cases enrolment is very modest (a few thousands and sometimes even a few hundred or less participants). Furthermore, statistical data are not always available. However, an increasing awareness of the seriousness of problems connected with an inadequate level of education for large sections of the population is clearly illustrated by the replies from some of these countries. In Canada the number of participants in basic literacy courses is estimated at 25,000 and in functional literacy courses at 100,000; these figures only represent 2 to 3% of the population groups involved. The number of adult literacy centres in the Federal Republic of Germany has gone up from 140 to 310 over the period 1982-1987 and the number of participants in these courses from 2,600 to 8,500.

In Sweden basic education courses for adults began in 1978/79 with 4 400 participants; in 1987/88 nearly 24,000 people participated in these courses. In 1987/88 in the Netherlands 75,000 people were enrolled in various literacy courses. In 1986/87 in Japan local literacy committees offered various types of literacy courses to 14,628 people who had not attended school when of school-going age.

18. Based on an analysis of the replies, the following table presents the main obstacles slowing down participation in adult literacy courses (Member States were invited to put these obstacles in order of importance):

Obstacles	Number of replies received	Weighted average of obstacle[4]	Number of countries indicating this as main obstacle
Lack of motivation	69	1.90	38
Inadequate curricula	54	2.65	12
Lack of time	59	2.86	13
Quantitative and qualitative shortcomings of teaching staff	59	3.20	3
Shortage of teaching materials	63	3.76	4

[4] The relationship between the sum total of points indicating the order of priority and the number of replies received.

Other obstacles were mentioned: lack of priority awarded to literacy (Nigeria, Pakistan); lack of financial resources (China, Malaysia); psychological problems linked to an illiterate status (Republic of Korea, Netherlands); students and teachers who abandon the course (Mali); lack of information about the availability of courses (the Netherlands as well as Spain point out that many illiterates believe that training opportunities exist neither beyond school-age nor outside the school); a reduced awareness by the public about the seriousness of the problem (Federal Republic of Germany); and scattered rural illiterate populations (Syrian Arab Republic). Several countries stated that the lack of financial resources was the main obstacle.

19. The following table, based on the inquiry, presents particular obstacles which have slowed down the participation of women in literacy programmes:

Obstacles	Number of replies received	Weighted average of obstacle[5]	Number of countries indicating this as main obstacle
Burden of doing two jobs per day	46	1.89	18
Certain traditions	43	1.98	16
Unfavourable local or family environment	49	2.02	16

Yet other obstacles were listed, such as: lack of awareness among husbands (Burkina Faso, Mali, Zambia); early motherhood and frequent pregnancies (Rwanda, Zaire); marriage of young girls (Mali, Bangladesh, Syrian Arab Republic); lack of child-care services for mothers attending courses (Federal Republic of Germany, Switzerland); courses ill-suited to the needs of women (Federal Republic of Germany, Gabon, Pakistan); and lack of a proper and efficient administrative organization (Colombia). Thirty-eight countries indicated that there are no particular obstacles to the participation of women and girls in literacy programmes. Sometimes remarkable success has been achieved in involving women in literacy courses, with the result that the disparity between the sexes existing in many countries has begun to diminish. Women represent more than 50% of participants in literacy courses in Sierra Leone, more than 70% in Thailand and more than 90% in the Republic of Korea. Some countries reported that, based on their research, women have a stronger desire to be literate than men.

Still, the general impression which can be drawn from the replies is that in many Member States female illiterates do not receive the attention they would seem to deserve given the inequality from which their sex is suffering.

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[5] The relationship between the sum total of points indicating the order of priority and the number of replies received.

Relapse into illiteracy

20. Based on the replies, research into the reasons for relapse into illiteracy has not been conducted with the energy that the importance of this phenomenon would seem to justify, with the result that literacy organizers do not benefit from a significant amount of "feedback". Seventy-seven replies indicated that no study or inquiry had been carried out or that these countries had no information on the subject. Only nineteen countries replied in the affirmative to this question, and fewer of them actually provided any figures. Nevertheless, the replies provided the following information about the rates of relapse into illiteracy following literacy courses: 5 to 8% in Yugoslavia (these rates are applied to persons with a considerable drop in literacy skills ten years after the end of the course); 15 to 20% in Chile; 30% in Ghana; 10% in Colombia (1982 estimate); and 10 to 20% in China. According to studies carried out in Thailand, 18% of pupils in the fourth year and 10% of those in the sixth year relapse into illiteracy three years after having left the school; the rates of relapse into illiteracy among participants in literacy campaigns is 11% one year after the end of the campaign. A study conducted in Suriname in 1979 showed that 100% of those people who had only received two years of primary education relapsed into illiteracy. Finally, a study from the Netherlands estimates at 21% the number of those who, having finished primary education, had not achieved a basic level of education.

21. The lack of studies or research has not prevented, however, a large number of statements on the main causes of the relapse. The outcomes of an analysis are presented in the following table (Member States were invited to put these obstacles in order of importance):

Obstacles	Number of replies received	Weighted average of obstacle[6]	Number of countries indicating this as main obstacle
Absence or inadequacy of post-literacy and continuing education progs.	61	1.75	29
Absence or inadequacy of surroundings favourable to the maintenance and consolidation of acquired skills	66	2.17	22
Insufficiency of the quality of education or literacy training	47	2.45	9
Insufficiency of duration of school attendance or literacy training	39	2.69	9

[6] The relationship between the sum total of points indicating the order of priority and the number of replies received.

It is therefore the lack or inadequacy of post-literacy and continuity education programmes for neo-literates which represents the main cause of the problem. Other reasons were mentioned such as: the lack of teaching methods for the disadvantaged (Luxembourg); a preference for audio-visual methods rather than practical lessons in reading and writing (Spain); the lack of textbooks and other teaching materials (Guyana); an unstable social and political situation (Afghanistan, Colombia). Finally, Switzerland noted that: "the accumulation of instabilities which children and their families experience from changing environments, the fact of never being consulted as a partner and the feeling that what one has to say is of no interest to anyone, shame, lack of understanding and the almost constant failure to communicate one's true ambitions often stand in the way of that peace and composure required by any form of learning."

Primary education systems intended for those who have not had the opportunity of attending the formal system when of regular school-going age

22. Sixty-eight countries indicated the existence of such establishments of formal and non-formal education for young people and adults aged 15 and above, while thirty-seven had such systems for children aged less than 15. Four countries reported that they had such systems without clarifying whether they were intended for those aged more than or less than 15. Here are a few examples: following two years of study in literacy centres in the Congo, a "social advancement" course is provided for adults leading to an adult-CEPE diploma equivalent to a formal-CEPE diploma. In order to cater to the needs of 14- to 16-year-old adolescents who had not completed basic general education in a satisfactory manner, Spain provides a compensatory education programme. The principle objective is to strengthen and improve basic abilities (reading, writing and arithmetic) by developing vocational skills and encouraging their involvement in socio-cultural life. Single-class schools are provided for Egyptian children aged less than 15 who have dropped out of school prematurely. Iraq, which gives priority to women in its non-formal establishments, intends to integrate its formal and non-formal schools into a unified, lifelong education system.

This type of education does not exist in twenty-two countries.

23. In fifty-nine countries diplomas issued by non-formal establishments are equivalent to those of formal education schools. These replies, which at first seem to be very encouraging, in many cases do not give enough information enabling us to be sure whether the equivalence of certificates issued by the non-formal system represents the norm or an exception.

NATIONAL PLANS CONCERNING BASIC EDUCATION

Making the adult population literate

24. Seventy-eight countries reported that they had plans concerning the reduction or eradication of illiteracy. Among them, forty-four had set the period leading up to the year 2000 as the target for the total eradication of this scourge. Those envisaging a date before the year 2000 included Ethiopia and Indonesia (1994), Saudi Arabia (1993/94), the Syrian Arab Republic, Guyana (1995), Argentina (1996), Brazil (1998) and Venezuela (1999). Without setting a date, Egypt intends to eradicate illiteracy during the present decade. Several countries, while foreseeing a massive

reduction in illiteracy, do not envisage its eradication before the year 2000. Thus, for example, Jordan intends to reduce the illiteracy rate to 8%, and the United Republic of Tanzania to 5%. Bangladesh plans to increase the literacy rate, which is at present at 29.2%, to 60% by the year 2000 and China proposes to reduce the number of illiterates by 50 million before this date. Some countries are in the process of preparing their plan; we could mention Cameroon, Mali, Uganda and Zambia; this latter country intends to launch a five-year literacy campaign in 1990. Seventeen countries do not have detailed plans on this matter.

25. Among the priority groups benefiting the most from these plans we find: women and young girls (particularly in rural areas); the rural population; industrial workers; craftsmen and other skilled workers; young people and particularly those adolescents who did not complete their primary studies; the handicapped; and immigrants, and sometimes gypsies, in industrialized countries. Here are a few extracts from various nationals plans: Mali proposes to make 5.5 million people literate and to open 15,000 literacy centres for this purpose, to integrate formal and non-formal education and to increase education's share in the national budget to 25%. Egypt foresees the obligatory participation of all illiterates aged 15 to 35 in literacy classes. Among other activities, measures will be taken to encourage or oblige people to participate in these programmes. In this country, a law forbids the employment of workers who do not possess a literacy certificate; illiterates who are employed may not be promoted until they obtain a certificate. Paraguay plans to improve literacy teaching methods and systems for adults, and will provide neo-literates with vocational training in order to direct them towards productive work. Towards the year 2000, Niger intends to open 2,000 literacy centres with an annual enrolment of 60,000 people. Nigeria proposes to increase the federal government's role and foresees the setting up of special funds to finance literacy activities.

Pre-primary and primary education

26. Twenty-five developing countries have indicated their intention to make primary education universal before the year 2000. Among them, the following Member States would like to achieve this objective before the year 2000: Burundi (1992), Congo, India, Pakistan (1993), Ethiopia (1993/1994), Sri Lanka (1995), Tunisia (1994/95), Venezuela (1999). It should be emphasized that some countries - Egypt, Indonesia and Oman amongst others - stated that universal primary education had already been achieved in recent years. Here are some extracts from the plans of various Member States concerning primary education:

- Sri Lanka plans to make participation in formal or non-formal education compulsory.
- Zimbabwe would like to introduce free primary education for all and guarantee for all those who have dropped out of school an opportunity to continue their studies by non-formal means.
- Pakistan intends to provide all primary schools in rural regions with at least two classrooms and three teachers.
- Burundi foresees setting up a teaching and documentation centre in each province.
- Cape Verde has decided to introduce the following measures to reduce educational wastage: reforming basic education with three cycles of two years, and integration of the school in the community; feeding programmes in the form of hot meals served in school canteens, teacher training, suitable teaching materials available in sufficient quantities, increasing the network of schools.
- In Switzerland a study carried out by the Swiss Conference of Cantonal

Directors of Public Education drew attention to the need to integrate the school into its local environment, of the joint responsibility of this environment in the innovatory process, of sufficient liberty granted to schools to introduce innovatory projects, of the universality of the educational process.

- Congo will stress improvements to the quality of education and particularly the fact that qualified staff leaving the Higher Institute of Educational Sciences (National University) will be posted to all basic education institutions.
- In Morocco the present reform foresees a revision of curricula before the year 2000, improvements in access to schools particularly in rural areas, educational support measures, remedial teaching, a reduction in the number of pupils per class, etc.
- In Turkey the plans to improve primary education up to the year 2000 envisage the expansion of pre-primary education, in particular the creation of a preparatory class for 6-year-old children. Pre-primary education will be provided free of charge. The number of in regional basic education boarding schools will be increased.
- Gabon intends to organize free, universal, compulsory pre-school education and to transform the structure of primary education by emphasizing traditional values and technologies, as well as manual work.
- Among the measures at present applied in Saudi Arabia to reduce school failure we note the stepping up of educational guidance; teacher training programmes are being revised and an effort is being made to attract university graduates to the teaching profession.
- In the province of Ontario, Canada, it is planned to extend pre-school education to 4-year-old children and to introduce full-time programmes for 5-year-olds, and to revise the curricula for grades one to six of the primary school in order to improve the development of analytical and communication skills.

Lessons learned from literacy campaigns

27. Hardly any country stated that it had not carried out or was not actually conducting a literacy campaign, programme or project. Eighty-three of the countries indicated that they have undertaken such activities. In sixty-three countries functional literacy programmes have been carried out or are in operation. An analysis of the replies shows that it is difficult to classify the activities conducted by various countries in this field because they vary so much in their form, their scope, their length, their organization and other characteristics. It would probably be correct to say that various types of literacy activity are gradually becoming regular features of the normal education system.

28. For example, Brazil has carried out many types of activities at the national and local levels, including projects by non-governmental and religious organizations. Among the mass literacy campaigns conducted at the national level in several countries (Chile, Cuba, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Nicaragua, amongst others), one of the most well known and well documented is the mass campaign in the United Republic of Tanzania. From 1972 onwards the whole country was involved in classes organized in schools, community centres, and in churches and mosques. Many villages constructed buildings at their own expense to house these classes. In other cases, private houses or even trees sheltered the classes. As a result of these efforts by the whole nation, the rate of illiteracy came down from 69% in 1967 to 9.6% in 1986.

In Morocco, beyond national campaigns, a few local campaigns for workers in

different sectors of the economy have been organized by the offices of the national railway, the ministry of commerce and the export, energy and phosphate.

In the context of a literacy campaign in Saudi Arabia, fifty expeditions were dispatched to remote regions, their programmes including health promotion and nutrition programmes.

In Paraguay during the 1970s there was a large-scale movement in favour of functional literacy, probably resulting from the Experimental World Literacy Campaign (EWLC).

29. The IBE's questionnaire asked Member States to give an overall view of their respective campaigns and programmes. Seventeen Member States considered that the objectives established for these activities had generally been reached; forty-three Member States thought that they had been reached to a certain extent; and twelve stated that they had been reached to a very modest degree.

30. A lengthy list of conditions contributing to the success of literacy programmes is given in the replies. The most frequently mentioned are the following: raising awareness and motivating the illiterate population; the existence of a political will and a coherent policy by the State; the active involvement of all official and public organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, and particularly those of the community; planning based on preliminary in-depth studies on the real need of the various groups of illiterates; establishment of a well-aimed strategy catering to the interests of these groups; variety in curricula which are based on daily life; and the involvement of well-trained, well-motivated and well-paid teachers and other literacy agents. Several replies also indicated the need for finances, and a proper co-ordination and management of literacy activities. The following extracts drawn from the replies could help to illustrate these situations:

- Guinea: "Mass campaigns are very expensive for a service which has very limited means at its disposal."
- Yemen: policies and objectives should be established according to the situation; ensure that they correspond to the resources available and that female teachers are included in order to attract the female population.
- Cuba: a policy should conform to the national strategy for socio-economic development; there should be a unified organizational and supervisory structure; close co-ordination should exist between the political and mass organizations; literacy teachers should benefit from political and social support; volunteers should be used to the greatest extent possible.
- Spain: every literacy programme should be accompanied by social and political measures contributing to an improvement in society.
- Israel: it is necessary to be aware of problems such as apprehension about going back to school, shame and anxiety, shortage of time, lack of awareness about the need to learn, the lack of support and encouragement from the family and the community.
- Switzerland: the functional learning and active participation of those concerned, the latter should be the subjects (and not the "objects") of their own training as well as being partners in the matter.
- Mozambique: the timing of literacy activities should be flexible in relation to the work cycle involving pupils, particularly in rural regions.
- Sweden: developing an individual approach to education in order to bridge the gap between education, work, the social environment, etc.

In conclusion, one could agree with the Canadian response according to which there are no "simple and quick" solutions to illiteracy problems.

PARTNERS IN THE LITERACY PROCESS

Educational establishments

31. Sixty-four replies confirmed the role of primary schools in the organization of literacy courses. This role encompasses the involvement of primary school-teachers as literacy instructors, the use of the buildings and educational equipment, and frequently the participation of schools in campaigns to raise the awareness and mobilize the illiterate. The reply from Kuwait, for example, points out that 67% of female teachers and 98% of male teachers were involved in literacy activities. The reply from China states that all schools are involved. In the United Republic of Tanzania primary schools are used outside normal teaching hours as adult education centres where the teaching process is carried out by the school teachers and where the head-teachers are given special responsibility to co-ordinate these activities. A similar undertaking has been carried out in Ethiopia which describes the role of these schools as extremely important.

32. However, the replies from Member States are not entirely in agreement about the contribution of primary schools to the cause of literacy. Nine replies stated that the schools were not involved or their participation was very slight.

33. Opinions are more reserved concerning the participation of post-secondary establishments (forty-eight positive replies). The most frequent forms of their involvement consists of carrying out research and sometimes in the evaluation of programmes as well as the employment of their students as literacy agents. Some countries also indicated the participation of higher education institutions in the pre-service and in-service training of teachers for literacy activities. In the United Republic of Tanzania the Institute of Adult Education presents a training programme for teachers (diploma level) as well as a correspondence course. Similarly in Qatar adult education and literacy are included as disciplines in the curricular of some faculties of the national university. Kenya indicates that universities provide many of the administrative and professional staff for literacy projects. In universities in the Republic of Korea can be found twenty-five institutes of lifelong education. Myanmar stresses the extremely important role played by the teachers and students of higher education establishments in this country. Indeed, their role is described as one of the crucial factors in the success of programmes. Approximately 80% of literacy agents are university students or secondary school pupils. Another example of the involvement of students is provided by Mexico where, since education is free of charge, the State requires students to conduct activities in the framework of their social service. The students provide literacy courses, basic and community education.

However, many replies were reticent about the contribution of the universities in their countries to the literacy movement. It was, for instance, "symbolic" (Oman), "very inadequate" (Congo), "erratic" (Ecuador), "practically nothing" (Malaysia). Other comments were: "only a few professors participate" (Cape Verde), "has no visible effect" (Mozambique), "very little involvement" (Zimbabwe).

Enterprises and other establishments

34. Their involvement in literacy activities is indicated in sixty-five replies, compared with twenty-six countries which replied in the negative. Usually enterprises provide literacy courses for their employees, most often in partnership with the educational authorities as far as the content of courses and the

involvement of teachers is concerned. In some countries, enterprises make financial contributions to the running of these courses (Niger and Nicaragua, for example), they offer paid educational leave to workers enabling them to participate in courses, and sometimes pay for teaching materials (Turkey, Guyana, Cape Verde and Venezuela). These courses are occasionally provided during working hours. In Turkey, enterprises with more than twenty workers are obliged by law to conduct literacy courses in co-operation with adult education centres. In Italy various contracts for workers in the public and private sectors have foreseen the setting aside of some time for the "right to study". The public sector contract mentions 150 hours per year for this purpose. France reports a traditional involvement of enterprises in educational activity for the last twenty years.

Involvement of the army

35. Sixty-one countries describe the involvement of the army in literacy activities, while twenty-nine countries gave a negative answer to this question. Frequently the army's literacy activities only involve its own personnel (soldiers, civilian staff and their families). Eleven countries, however, provided information on the participation of military personnel in literacy programmes and activities aimed at large illiterate population groups. For instance Mozambique specified that the Army was entirely involved in the first literacy campaign in that country. Chad, the Philippines and Venezuela stated that military personnel are sometimes involved in remote rural areas which are difficult to reach for civilian instructors. Sudan encourages recruits to participate in such courses by awarding them promotions. Apart from organizing educational programmes, Israel teaches recruits a trade which they can carry out in civilian life after their military service. The Army frequently provides material support, including transport for literacy campaigns. In several countries representatives of ministries of defence participate in co-ordinating committees for literacy programmes at the national and local levels.

The participation of other public and private organizations

36. Sixty-nine countries gave a positive reply to the participation of NGOs. A concise account of the role of these organizations is provided by the reply from the Syrian Arab Republic: "these organizations are able to participate actively by making the general public more aware and receptive through their structure, their place in society, their deep understanding of the nature of the problem and their ability to draw on a multitude of human skills to achieve the objective."

The functions of these various public institutions are very diverse: the direct organization of literacy courses through the provision of materials and literacy instructors; raising awareness among and motivating the illiterate population; the mobilization of material and financial resources; the loan of buildings to house literacy courses; participation in planning literacy activities and programmes, etc. Various non-governmental organizations are involved in committees, councils and national and local commissions, where such bodies exist. The general situation can be illustrated from Iraq's reply: "non-governmental organizations participate in the mobilization of qualified personnel and teachers; they carry out censuses of the illiterate population; they organize the construction of literacy centres and roads leading to these centres; the collection of funds and campaigns contributing to awareness raising. In Denmark the voluntary associations organize Danish courses for the unemployed and other adults with an inadequate level of education. According to some replies, the most actively involved public organizations are trade

unions, women's organizations, youth associations and occasionally religious organizations. While drawing attention to the remarkable quality of the involvement of these organizations, attested in most replies, it is necessary to point out that eighteen countries indicated that there was no kind of participation on the part of these organizations and, apart from the ones mentioned above, others are rarely indicated.

The role of public information services

37. Eighty-five replies describe the role played by the information media in raising the awareness of public opinion on the nature, degree and consequences of illiteracy. Those usually used are the press, radio, television and, to a lesser extent, posters, exhibitions, as well as a number of meetings, workshops, symposia, etc. In Ecuador a special newsletter entitled "Campaign newspaper" is published regularly and one section of national newspapers is reserved for "news from the campaign".

38. Graduation ceremonies and the awarding of literacy certificates take place at public gatherings. Several countries (Congo, Gabon, the Philippines, Sierra Leone, Uganda) make special announcements on International Literacy Day each year. Places of worship are used in Egypt, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey to explain to the public the disadvantages of illiteracy, calling upon them to involve themselves in literacy classes and appealing to literate persons to contribute to the national effort. Guinea also indicates that plays are used to raise public awareness. In Australia, during International Literacy Year, the government granted 3 million dollars to finance a literacy project; 20% of this amount was set aside for raising public awareness. In Denmark, during International Literacy Year, the National Commission for UNESCO is publishing a newsletter devoted to literacy problems at the national and international levels.

The co-ordination of literacy activities

39. Fifty-seven countries report that they have inter-ministerial or other co-ordination bodies (committees, commissions, national councils) which are nearly always chaired by the ministers of education. These institutions are usually made up of representatives from various ministries; as an example of one of them, we can give the composition of the Higher Literacy Council in the Syrian Arab Republic which is made up of governmental agencies and representatives of concerned non-governmental organizations and unions. The council has a special fund available to finance literacy activities at the national level.

In some countries governmental institutions are only slightly involved in literacy activities. Under such circumstances, these activities are conducted entirely by non-governmental organizations, often without adequate co-ordination, without government support and, as a result, with very modest results. This type of situation may be illustrated by one country's reply: "there is no political will on the part of the government, whose involvement is slight".

Financing literacy activities

40. The eighty replies received on this subject demonstrate the major role played by public funds in financing literacy activities which, in twenty-four countries, amounted to 100%. Only two countries indicated that the State's share of

expenditure on literacy was less than 50%. Thirty-eight developing countries announced that they received foreign aid which, in a few cases, was very significant. For example, foreign aid as a proportion of the total literacy budget amounted to: 48% in Indonesia (in 1989/90); 45% in Sri Lanka; 40% in Zambia and Congo; 33% in Bangladesh; 31% in Cape Verde, etc.

41. The share of private contributions, even in the twenty-nine countries which replied to this question, is often less than 10%, achieving the high figures of up to 50% in Israel, 26% in Guyana, and 15% in Brazil and Ecuador. Here are a few examples of the share of different sources of financing: Cape Verde - Ministry of Education, 25%, other ministries, 25%, businesses, 2%, non-governmental organizations, 15%, foreign aid, 31%; Zimbabwe - public funds, 90%, private sources, 1%, foreign aid, 9%; Ecuador - public sources, 80%, private sources, 15%, foreign aid, 5%.

42. Concerning the allocation of funds by item of expenditure, the largest single amount goes on staff. In Colombia, for example: staff costs represent 65.9%; materials, 9.2%; operating costs, 10%; and training 14.9%. For Mexico (1989 data): staff costs, 30%; materials, 24%; general services, 7%; and bonuses to agents, 39%. In Sri Lanka: staff costs, 70%; materials, 5%; and operating costs, 25%. In Indonesia: staff costs, 3%; materials, 7%; operating costs, 90%. In Ecuador: staff costs, 90%; materials and operating costs, 10%. In Oman: staff costs, 95.7%; textbook printing, 3.1%; teaching materials, 1.2%. The two following examples are a good illustration of the relationship between the different partners involved in financing: in Israel the government pays the teachers but operating costs are paid by other agencies; in Zambia the staff are paid from national funds and the operating costs by money originating abroad.

PROGRAMME CONTENT AND LITERACY METHODS

Taking the needs of different illiterate population groups into account

43. In replying to the questionnaire, seventy-six countries reported that they take account of the specific needs, the experiences and skills of adult illiterates belonging to specific groups in their literacy programmes. Eighteen countries gave a negative reply. Such a high number of negative replies seems surprising. To substantiate this we could quote one reply which says that "the programmes are common for everybody, directed at all illiterate groups without differentiation and they are acceptable by all these groups".

44. The groups whose specific needs are taken account of by Member States are mainly women, populations in rural and remote regions, factory workers and craftsmen, fishermen, minority groups, the handicapped, while in industrialized countries reference is frequently made to migrants, refugees, prisoners and recruits.

45. Here are some typical means employed to take account of the needs of these various groups: in Chad preliminary discussions are held with the learners to identify their needs. Guinea resolves the problem by creating specific literacy centres for each target group. Nicaragua uses varied strategies and specially adapted materials. Guyana lays emphasis on programme planning at the local level in order to incorporate the needs of local populations. In Italy the programmes are also

prepared at the local level and take into account the audience for which they are designed; in this way the organization, the content, the teaching methods and educational aids are extremely varied. In Kenya adult students are involved in the preparation of teaching materials and the instructors are recruited among local inhabitants. In Niger, these needs are transformed into content through the languages of the group. In Hungary special camps are organized for young people who live in disadvantaged situations. In Thailand specific functional literacy programmes are directed at various minority groups, to the urban and rural population, and to those of the four geographical regions. On average in this country, 25% of programme content is made up of national material, 50% regional and 25% local material.

46. Special provisions introduced into programmes for women were indicated in forty-eight replies. Forty other replies mentioned that special arrangements for illiterate women were not regularly available. In a number of countries which gave positive replies, the priority in literacy policies is given to "the female condition, as a mother, a worker and a member of the community" (the Peruvian reply). These priorities are evidenced by a higher proportion of women in literacy courses. In Malawi, for example, women make up 80% of the 212,000 participants in functional literacy programmes. In the Republic of Korea, women form 95% of participants.

47. The most frequently mentioned materials specifically designed for women are those connected with health, nurseries, childcare, nutrition, family education, sewing and knitting. Among the organizational measures and methods adopted in favour of women we could mention institutes of female education (Cote d'Ivoire); centres for maternal and child protection (Niger); training and women's community centres (Guinea); female literacy centres and homes (Congo). In Yugoslavia private literacy courses are provided at home for housewives with the aid of mobile instructors. Sweden and Denmark also organize specific courses for women.

We should also take note of high-level government institutions specifically concerned with women's problems; the Ministry of Women's Affairs in Bangladesh; and the General Presidency for the Education of Young Girls in Saudi Arabia; this latter organization conducts research and supervises cultural programmes intended for women and young girls.

48. An examination of both positive and negative replies does not lead to the conclusion that the needs of female illiterates are really taken into account given their larger numbers; furthermore, even where "specific" measures have been adopted, they often deal with areas which have always been reserved for women: the kitchen, childcare and religious education.

Organizational methods for literacy courses

49. A table showing the variety of structures in different types and levels of literacy programmes is presented in document no. 2 in this series on pages 113-118. We should also add some other examples displaying particular characteristics. In Jamaica, the number of pupils per group varies in relation to the qualifications of the teacher; there are twenty-five of them if the teacher is qualified and this is reduced to eight if the instructor is an unqualified volunteer. In Yugoslavia, the length of courses, which is normally twelve months, varies according to individual competence and the prior educational level of participants. For example, courses intended for young people up to the age of 17 years are organized daily, amounting to eighteen hours per week. Individual lessons are given two to three times a week, each one lasting two to three hours. The number of learners per group also

varies: there are about fifteen to twenty people in homogenous groups and eight to fifteen in diversified groups. In Switzerland courses vary widely: there length ranges from two to twenty hours per week, and a whole course from a few weeks to a few years. What binds these courses together is that they are arranged in small groups stressing individual instruction. The same approach is adopted in the Republic of Korea which combines individual instruction and group instruction. Typically, courses are organized outside working hours, sometimes on Saturdays and Sundays.

Programme elements

50. The questionnaire asked Member States which of the following elements were included in their literacy programmes: health and hygiene, nutrition, population, infant care, the environment, basic legal knowledge, the world of work and civic education. Nearly all of these elements were mentioned in the replies with the exception of legal knowledge. However, new elements augmented to the list: Suriname added elements relating to culture, to the media and critical judgement; Cape Verde, notions of history and geography, and community concerns; El Salvador and Ecuador, amongst others, human rights; Jamaica, heritage, social and economic duties; Zimbabwe, worker's rights and responsibilities; the Republic of Korea, consumer's rights, literacy by computer, leisure-time education; Switzerland, involvement in the community, accommodation, the right to holidays, basic knowledge of computers, and knowledge of the home country for migrants.

We could also add elements connected with working activities, which are often included in literacy programmes, or, on the other hand, elements of literacy which are included in vocational training programmes. In Turkey, for example, when enrolling for a course, the participants must indicate the nature of the knowledge or skills they would like to acquire, in other words "functional" guidance is included from the very beginning. If the learner does not yet have basic knowledge (reading and writing) these are taught initially. In Spain courses for gypsies include driving lessons. In Kenya courses deal with such subjects as animal husbandry, farming and the conservation of soil and water.

Literacy methods and evaluation

51. An individual approach is more and more evident in literacy courses. The Australian reply specifies that success often depends on personal and rewarding programmes adapted to the individual. Among the methods used in the educational process one could mention group discussions where the learners are invited to speak about their background and life (Cape Verde and Nicaragua, for example), or "a literate teaches an illiterate" (Turkey). In Kenya teachers go to visit the learners in their working environment outside normal teaching hours in order to identify their particular problems. In Suriname the analysis/synthesis method is used; in post-literacy courses the programmes are based on problem-solving methods. In the Syrian Arab Republic post-literacy activities are arranged as a series of study periods which include tutorials, seminars and practical fieldwork.

52. According to the replies, teaching methods based on written materials and dialogue between the teacher and the pupil are still the most frequently employed. Modern educational technology is used only rarely. As far as the media are concerned, radio is often used as a vehicle for literacy programmes, as is mentioned in forty-five replies. The use of television for educational purposes is reported in thirty-three replies. In Congo, for example, post-literacy activities are supported by both radio and television through the broadcast entitled "It's never too late", and a

post-literacy newspaper. Newspapers are mentioned in nine replies. The journal "La Forêt", launched in 1978 in the framework of the functional literacy project supported initially by France, continues its literacy mission in support of new literates. Other audio-visual media, such as video, the cinema and computers are used to a lesser extent.

Twenty-seven countries do not use radio and television for literacy course, or only very rarely so. The limited use of educational technologies is often due to the lack of funds to purchase them, even though several replies coming from developing countries mention the urgent need for such materials as well as printing equipment for textbooks (Malaysia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Sierra Leone, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe, amongst others).

53. In reply to the question concerning the control and evaluation of the neo-literates' knowledge, eighty countries reported the use of tests and examinations. However, the standard tests are sometimes a matter of dispute; they are often supplemented or replaced by other techniques such as continuous evaluation, self-evaluation, and joint evaluation by the teacher and the learner. In the Federal Republic of Germany standard tests are employed, and the new teaching strategy used for literacy is based on individual evaluation of learning and verification of the use of the newly acquired knowledge in the learners' lives. Another important aspect of this strategy consists of integrating teaching and vocational guidance. In the Republic of Korea formal tests and examinations are not obligatory for the learners; the teachers give them homework and check their progress. This is accompanied by self-teaching and guidance.

Literacy languages

54. The replies confirm that for a significant number of countries whose population speaks a wide variety of languages and dialects, the language problem is at the centre of the educational authorities' concerns. After several experiments using various combinations of the official language and the mother tongue, many countries have come to the conclusion that literacy in the mother tongue must take priority; this is supported by the Kenyan reply according to which the present policy, based on more than two decades of struggle against illiteracy, is firmly fixed on using the mother tongue except in mixed population areas (with several dialects) where literacy takes place in the national language (Kiswahili). Numerous dialects mean that several versions of the teaching materials must be published (within the limits of available resources). Basic literacy textbooks are produced in twenty-three languages. Eighteen ethnic groups do not yet have their own textbooks (the country contains forty-one linguistic groups altogether). This point of view is shared by Mozambique where "experience has shown that it is extremely difficult to carry out literacy programmes in the official language when this is not the mother tongue of the participants. Studies are being carried out at this time with the objective of introducing the mother tongue in an experimental manner from 1991 onwards." In Cote d'Ivoire and Niger different languages are used for literacy teaching: the mother tongue in rural areas and the official language in urban areas.
Some replies refer to problems associated with handwriting and the lack of knowledge about the linguistic and grammatical origins of some dialects. Paraguay is trying to resolve the language question by using the mother-tongue in an oral form. Some industrialized countries have indicated major problems connected with literacy among migrants and members of their families; these problems often arise from the lack of teachers in the relevant mother-tongues. As a solution to these difficulties, Austria has established close collaboration with the migrants' countries of origin in the form of exchanges of teachers and teaching materials.

55. Only twenty-one countries provide bi-lingual literacy for certain groups of the population. Among the solutions, mention could be made of Cape Verde where literacy courses are conducted in Portuguese, but the instructors use the mother tongue to explain particular difficulties during the lessons. In Mexico the mother tongue is used for the initial phase of literacy while towards the end the official language takes over. For the "Amerindians" of Guyana, whose language is not the "lingua franca" (the teaching language used in the education system), adult learners use their children and other school pupils as interpreters.

Certificates, promotion from literacy courses to formal education

56. Sixty-eight countries indicated that certificates are awarded to participants at the end of literacy courses, while sixteen countries gave a negative reply. For forty-two of these sixty-eight countries these certificates enable them to go on to formal studies, while twenty-four other countries state that this is not the case. The positive aspects of this information give further evidence of the trend towards integrating formal and non-formal education. Several countries indicated that a considerable proportion of their population went on to higher levels of education as a result of literacy courses; this is the case for 80% of those who completed literacy courses in Kuwait; 75% in Venezuela; and 60% in Chile. In Turkey, 4 million people have graduated from the second level of literacy courses which is equivalent to the end of primary studies, and in Ethiopia 1 million of those who finished literacy courses went on to primary or secondary education. However, this is not the case in other countries where very few of those who followed literacy courses enjoy this possibility or in another country where "many people are awarded certificates at the end of literacy courses but not all institutions accept these certificates."

Another situation is found in Guatemala where the lack of educational centres for people aged 15 and above in rural areas means that hardly anyone living there can use their literacy certificate to continue their primary studies.

Certificates awarded at the end of courses frequently permit direct access to the equivalent primary education classes: for example, grade two in Peru, or grade five in Oman and Zambia. In other cases, completion of literacy courses only gives the right to sit the examination leading to the primary education certificate (Egypt).

57. To sum up, we could refer to the Iraqi reply which, on the subject of integrating formal and non-formal education, states that both of them are developed "in parallel" but in close co-ordination and together form a single system. Thus, the different levels of literacy classes (basic, complementary, follow-up, community school) have a tendency gradually to resemble the standards of primary education.

Literacy agents

58. Fifty-eight countries provided data on the employment of full-time literacy teachers. Their proportion varied from zero (eleven countries) to 100% (nine countries). In twenty-five countries they represent the majority; in twenty-two other countries they amount to at least 10%.

59. Fifty-nine countries indicated the use of volunteers as literacy agents, while only eight countries do not employ volunteers. In twenty-eight countries they made up more than 50% of literacy instructors; among them we find such countries as

Indonesia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Pakistan and the United Republic of Tanzania which have all conducted large-scale literacy projects in recent years. The proportion of volunteers is at least 10% in sixteen countries. The origins of volunteers are extremely varied. A few examples will illustrate the situation: in Paraguay they consist of primary and secondary teachers, secondary school pupils, military officers and cadets, and policemen; in Sierra Leone they include primary and secondary teachers, and social development agents; in Congo volunteers are mainly the unemployed, often out-of-school young people; in Iraq literacy agents who participated in the National Literacy Campaign (1978-1987) included primary school-teachers (72.2%), the remainder were made up of students from teacher training colleges, secondary school-teachers and army personnel.

Seventy-five countries indicated the number of teachers who possess a teaching certificate or diploma. They represent 50% in forty-two countries and 10% or less in nine countries.

60. Special basic training and in-service training programmes for literacy agents are indicated by nineteen countries, while sixty-nine others have stated that no activities of this kind are organized. This training takes place in short initial courses and in in-service courses. Initial training of sufficient length is only rarely provided. The following examples give a general impression of the organization of training provided for these agents: in Morocco a preliminary training and information course is provided by the Ministry of Social Affairs; in El Salvador training courses deal with literacy methods, teaching materials and evaluation; in Spain all those who work in the context of provincial education courses for adults undergo initial basic training in the form of courses, seminars and workshops. In Sierra Leone one week's training is provided to agents and deals with literacy methods, and the organization and management of programmes; in Zimbabwe a university course exists for training higher management staff. In Malawi literacy instructors are chosen by the villagers themselves; they then undergo preliminary training. In Mozambique special training lasting one year is available and it is foreseen that it will eventually be extended to three years. In this same country a refresher course lasting fifteen to forty-five days in eleven specialized centres is also available.

61. It is a fact that literacy agents, and particularly volunteers, do not receive sufficient financial reward or moral support. Even so, countries mention some methods used to encourage volunteers; the monthly salary varies from US$3.5 in Malawi to US$400 in Saudi Arabia; but in many countries volunteers receive no financial reward and live on gifts from the villagers. Some countries have attempted to combine financial payments with social rewards. In Chad the best volunteers are promoted to vocational schools through tests and examinations in order to become "qualified" teachers. In the Syrian Arab Republic volunteers are rewarded with modest cash payments as well as being placed on the shortlist for promotions, and have the right to benefit from grants and subsidized transport.

62. It is evident that in order to carry out large-scale literacy activities volunteer teachers are essential; meanwhile, the lack of sufficient qualifications and of motivation brought about by inadequate or non-existent financial rewards have a negative effect on the success of the programmes. In this context we can quote from one country's reply: "urgent needs can be summed up as follows: where and how to find a teacher completely devoted to his calling."

Literacy research

63. Eighty-two countries indicated that research is carried out on literacy, even if sometimes minimal or intermittent. Eight other countries, however, were unable to confirm the existence of such research.

The research subjects most often dealt with concerned: the content of literacy programmes and teaching methods (forty-seven replies); the nature, scope and outcomes of illiteracy (thirty-six replies); problems of motivation (thirty-two replies); the study of factors encouraging or discouraging literacy for young people and adults (thirty-two replies); the relationship between literacy and employment (twenty-seven replies); functional literacy (twenty-four replies); the relationship between illiteracy and school failure (twenty-four replies); and relapse into illiteracy (nineteen replies). Other research themes are mentioned in the replies: the present situation concerning educational attitudes of out-of-school youth and adults (Philippines); the relationship between illiteracy among workers, their productivity and their social behaviour (Iraq); the evaluation of national literacy experiments and forecasting educational policies and national literacy strategies for the future (a report prepared for Grenada by the Caribbean Council for Adult Education).

Research carried out in Congo on adult motivation came to the conclusion that their lack of motivation is due to the exaggeratedly formal character for literacy courses and everything associated with them: restricted hours, irregular and ill-qualified instructors, the lack of supplies (lighting in schools, teaching materials, etc.). Research conducted in Mozambique has shown that success in courses provided by enterprises is only guaranteed when the administration is convinced that a higher level of education of its staff will have an effect upon productivity.

64. In Kenya a major project was carried out recently by the IIEP under the title "The functioning of the literacy project in Kenya." It came to significant conclusions: (a) there is an urgent need to organize post-literacy activities; (b) one of the most important problems is overcoming the limitations to its expansion; and (c) the core problem is the motivation of participants.

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION AND THE ROLE OF UNESCO.

International, regional and bilateral co-operation for basic education

65. Most countries acknowledge the importance of international co-operation as a means for strengthening their own capacity for implementing successful national literacy projects.

Ninety countries indicated their involvement in international co-operation activities in the field of primary education and adult literacy, and submitted an impressive list of their partners. International co-operation has many facets, such as: financial assistance, programme development, teaching materials; seminars and training courses for literacy staff (Sao Tomé and Principe); printing of course books, etc., for both teachers and learners (Paraguay); assistance with the introduction of innovations (Thailand); teacher training for distance education, evaluating literacy programmes, publication of educational materials (Kenya). The Federal Republic of Germany considers that the following are the most effective forms of co-operation: the exchange of experience and information; contributing to national adult education policy in developing countries; mobilizing resources for

literacy; publications; research on motivation; developing and printing literacy course books; and training instructors and officers for literacy programmes.

66. The most urgent priorities that Member States hope to satisfy through international co-operation are the following (in descending order of priority): staff training and the provision of qualified teachers; financial aid; production of educational materials; assistance with preparing and planning literacy strategies; equipment (particularly printing machinery, studios for educational radio and vehicles); supporting educational infrastructures; research.

Some other replies should also be noted: among the most urgent priorities, Colombia noted that experts were required for specific projects in adult education; Mali reported that printing machinery, originally purchased at the time of UNESCO's literacy pilot project, urgently needed replacing; Burundi mentioned the financing of refresher courses for inspectors, head-teachers and primary school-teachers, financial support to the educational supplies unit, the financing of operational seminars for literacy, subsidies for study trips and short-term grants for literacy staff, etc. The United Republic of Tanzania has an urgent need for special equipment to make 200,000 handicapped adults literate, and is also lacking personal transport (bicycles, mopeds, small vehicles, etc.) which would allow teachers to be mobile.

67. Fifty-two countries, of which thirty-nine developing countries, stated that they were ready to increase aid in the field of literacy to other countries, while twenty-nine countries gave a negative reply to this question referring to their own shortages of financial and human resources. The donor countries specified the areas in which they were ready to provide assistance: the exchanges of experts; the provision of teaching materials; the organization of seminars; training literacy agents; and technical assistance particularly in the preparation of programmes, etc.

68. Several donor countries in the developed world, while expressing their readiness to step up co-operation and assistance to developing countries, provided some supplementary information. Swiss co-operation for development supports in the first place the least developed countries, regions and population groups. Activities are chosen on the basis of the following criteria: the relationship of these activities to the global development of the countries concerned; involvement in on-going Swiss co-operation programmes; technical feasibility; the multiplier effects of development; the creation of self-supporting employment opportunities; the effects on the population involved, in particular women and children; economic viability; and the ability of the responsible institution in the developing country to carry on with the project after Swiss assistance has come to an end.

The principles guiding relations on assistance between the Federal Republic of Germany and developing countries is to organize these projects on the basis of a partnership with the institutions of a given country. Norway states that its financial assistance to literacy programmes is given in the first instance to projects concerning women and their role. Japan intends to continue providing assistance via APPEAL and ACCU.

Over the last twenty-five years, France has been stepping up its assistance to primary education in developing countries through grants for teachers to undertake short-term study courses, the organization of training seminars in the country concerned, increasing the production of textbooks, etc.

The Government of Canada has foreseen an annual increase of 5% in development aid in its budget for 1991-1992.

Many developing countries have stated that they are ready to provide mutual assistance in the form of exchanges of experience, experts, teaching materials, as well as in the field of specialist training.

Co-operation with UNESCO

69. Sixty-four countries mentioned UNESCO among their partners in the field of international co-operation. This co-operation assumes many forms: student grants, the organization of seminars and workshops; consultancy services; teaching materials; financial aid; staff training, etc.

Overall opinions on UNESCO's aid varied from "very efficient" to "not significant" and even to "not at all available". The most frequently expressed opinion in the replies could be illustrated by that of Cape Verde which can be summed up as follows: good quality, useful results but inadequate quantity. Another quotation, this time from the Philippines, stated what Member States expect from UNESCO, such as continuity and intensification of its support by providing advice and technical assistance - both financial and in other forms.

70. The majority of countries indicated their participation in regional programmes concerning primary education and adult literacy launched by UNESCO. The conception of these programmes is particularly appreciated; several Member States provided information about the initial positive outcomes of these projects, but others avoided any expression of clear approval and provided instead recommendations for improving their operation, among which we may cite the following: "the programme must be made operational" (Congo); to improve the execution of the regional programme a multi-sectorial commission is required to carry out operational activities, periodical meetings with those responsible in the sub-region, and written communication with the institutions involved in the programme (Guatemala). Programmes could be improved by periodical censuses on the situation of illiteracy in each country, the organization of seminars to evaluate progress achieved and finding solutions to common problems by launching programmes to make the whole society aware of the importance of literacy, and by motivating governments to accept that the eradication of illiteracy is a priority (Jamaica). The regional programme should develop a middle-term action plan stressing the strengthening of regional co-operation (Nigeria).

71. To conclude this brief report, we should quote the reply from Bangladesh: "international assistance, such as that provided by UNESCO, UNICEF and ISESCO, has shown itself to be very effective"; and that from El Salvador: "co-ordination is required between international organizations to avoid isolated efforts and to incorporate basic education for all into projects."

Coopération avec l'UNESCO

69. Soixante-quatre pays ont mentionné l'UNESCO parmi leurs partenaires dans le domaine de la coopération internationale. Les formes de cette coopération sont très diverses : bourses, organisation de séminaires et d'ateliers, services de consultation, matériel didactique, aide financière, formation du personnel, etc...
Les appréciations d'ensemble sur l'aide apportée par l'UNESCO vont de la mention "très efficace" à "peu importante" ou même "pas d'assistance du tout". Les opinions les plus fréquentes, contenues dans les réponses, peuvent être illustrées par celle du Cap-Vert qui se résume ainsi : qualité satisfaisante, résultats bons mais quantitativement insuffisants. Une autre réponse, celle des Philippines, formule ainsi ce que les Etats membres attendent de l'UNESCO et qui consiste à continuer à intensifier son support aux Etats en leur fournissant des conseils, une assistance technique et financière et une aide sous d'autres formes.

70. La plupart des pays ont indiqué leur participation à des programmes régionaux relatifs à l'enseignement primaire et à l'alphabétisation des adultes lancés à l'initiative de l'UNESCO. Le concept de ces programmes est particulièrement apprécié; plusieurs Etats membrés ont fait connaître les premiers résultats positifs de ces projets mais d'autres ont évité de formuler des appréciations précises et ont fourni des recommandations pour améliorer leur mise en application, parmi lesquelles on peut citer les suivantes : "il convient de rendre le programme opérationnel" (Congo); pour améliorer l'exécution du programme régional il faudrait une Commission multisectorielle pour coordonner les activités d'exécution, des réunions périodiques avec le responsable de la sous-région, une communication par écrit avec les institutions comprises dans le Programme (Guatemala). Les programmes pourraient être améliorés par le recensement périodique de l'état de la situation de l'analphabétisme dans chaque pays, l'organisation de séminaires pour évaluer les progrès réalisés et trouver des solutions aux problèmes communs, par le lancement de programmes afin de sensibiliser la société tout entière sur les valeurs de l'alphabétisme, par la motivation des gouvernements pour accepter l'éradication de l'analphabétisme comme une priorité (Jamaïque). Le programme régional doit développer le plan d'action à moyen terme avec un accent sur le renforcement de la coopération régionale (Nigéria).

71. Pour terminer ce bref exposé, il convient de citer la réponse du Bangladesh: "l'assistance internationale comme par exemple celle fournie par l'UNESCO, l'Unicef et l'ISESCO a prouvé qu'elle était la plus efficace" et celle du Salvador : "la coordination est nécessaire entre les organismes internationaux pour éviter les efforts isolés et incorporer l'éducation de base pour tous dans les projets".